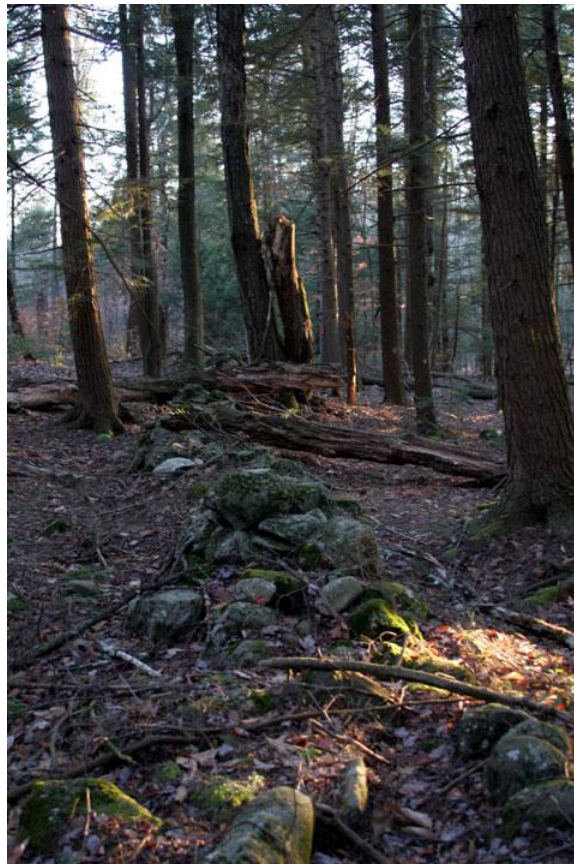




Property Management Plan for
Bassett/Kell Property

Location (address):	115 Mill St., Rear, West Hartland, CT 06091
Tax Map Number (Map/Block/Lot):	14-15-002A
Tax Acres:	22.327 (20' ROW)
Year Acquired:	November 9, 2011
Seller/Grantor:	Jeanne Kell
Recorded Deed (Vol./Page):	88 / 59-02
Easement(s) / Holders, if any:	N/A
Map of Record (Vol./Page):	





- 1. Preparation Date:** This plan was prepared on September 15, 2011 by Gail DiMaggio, Sue Murray and Neil Gilpin. It remains in effect until September 15, 2017, and is subject to review and reauthorization with revision, as needed, thereafter at five year intervals.
- 2. Authorship and Qualifications:** The authors of the document are members of the Board of Directors of the Hartland Land Trust, Inc, and also members of the Hartland Land Trust Acquisition and Stewardship Committee.

3. Summary

The Bassett/Kell Property consists of 22.327 acres located at the rear of 115 Mill Street in West Hartland, CT. On November 9, 2011, The Hartland Land Trust, Inc., a 501 (C) (3) charitable organization, (HLT) received a donation of fee interest in the Bassett/Kell property which consists of undeveloped forest and wetlands including a swamp. At one time prior to the 20th century the property served as farmland or grazing land. This is evidenced by the numerous stone walls still standing. It also serves as the headwaters to a brook known as **Beaver Brook ???** which feeds into the West Branch of the federally designated “Wild and Scenic” Farmington River.

The Bassett/Kell families have donated the property to the Hartland Land Trust to benefit the town of Hartland and its community by preserving the property in its present natural and open condition and to preserve its present historic, scenic, vegetative, wildlife and hydrological conditions. The property was conveyed subject to certain conservation restrictions. These deeded restrictions will run with the land conveyed forever and be binding on the Hartland Land Trust and its successors or any future assignees of the property.

These conservation restrictions are aimed at preserving the property in its present natural & open condition, protecting it from threats and preventing any future uses of the property that might affect the present condition. These include but are not limited to sources of stress such as pests and pathogens; invasive species; inappropriate land management; inappropriate recreational activity; poaching; acid rain; global climate change; earth removal and/or soil disturbance; and pollution.

This plan identifies management objectives that either enhance the viability of these conservation values or abate threats, and will ensure that all activities the Hartland Land Trust undertakes are consistent with the conservation purposes of the property.



4. Background Information:

Transaction Details: In October, 2011, the Hartland Land Trust received a donation of fee interest in the Bassett/Kell property. Hartland Land Trust accepted the donation of the property because it yields a significant public benefit and has conservation significance consistent with the organization's mission which is *"to endeavor to maintain the rural character of the Hartland, Connecticut area for present and future generations by protecting its diverse natural resources through the conservation and management of significant lands"*.

Property Description:

The Bassett/Kell property consists of 22.327+/- acres located at Mill St. in West Hartland, Connecticut (see map [give its location in plan]). The property is located within a large area of undeveloped pristine area of forest and wetland. The landscape varies consisting of natural land cover much of which is likely 2nd growth upland forest dominated by hemlock, white pine, maple, oak, rock ledges, several small streams, and swamp. It also contains many stone walls which served as fencing during the property's past agricultural use. Its topography is varied with elevations of approximately 1100 ft above sea level. The property boundaries consist of privately owned tracts of similar woodlands to the north, south, and east, as well as one point of contact with the State of Connecticut's Tunxis State Forest. It is also bounded on the west side by 2 small cottages on residential lots which were created by separating the donated land from the two separate pieces of land originally owned by the family as part of Bassett/Kell Family's plan to conserve the land. At this time the property is undocumented as to the existence of any rare species but in general contains a diverse range of plant, animal, bird and amphibian life in what appears to be a very healthy habitat.

Property Improvements

There are no existing structures on the property. Stone walls are the only archaeological remains observed to date. There is a partial trail though the property which was used by the owners for recreational hiking. Designated public access and parking was nonexistent at the time the property was donated.

Historic Land Uses:



This property was previously owned by _____. It was part of a small farm and probably mainly as pastureland for grazing. Stanley Ransom notes in his book “The History of Hartland” that between 1900 until about 1930 there was “the second Exodus from Hartland farms”. It was the year 1910 when the area was abandoned as farm use when the Bassett family first purchased it and began to enjoy it as recreational property. The open fields and pastures began to grow into brush and finally into the woodlands of today.

Historic Topographic Maps:

<http://docs.unh.edu/towns/HartlandConnecticutMapList.htm>

Will reference this as appendix item

Historic Aerial Photographs: <http://cslib.cdmhost.com/custom/aerials.php>

Will reference this as appendix item

Ongoing Land Uses: As a conservation property the ongoing use will be limited to recreation and educational use while protecting of the natural state of the property.

5. Public Benefits of the Protected Property:

The conservation of the Property is clearly “pursuant to a clearly delineated Federal, State and local governmental conservation policy, and will yield a significant public benefit.” The governmental policies pursuant to which the property is being preserved include but are not necessarily limited to the following:

- The Premises are a “significant natural habitat” area that qualifies as “open space” that is being preserved “for the scenic enjoyment of the general public” pursuant to Section 170(h)(4)(A)(iii)(I) of the Internal Revenue Service Code. The Premises are part of a large unfragmented forest area which supports a large and diverse population of wildlife and vegetation.
- The Premises lie within the federally recognized Forest Legacy Area for western Connecticut and its protection is consistent with Connecticut’s Statewide Forest Resource Plan to educate landowners about the value of forest conservation and stewardship.
- Section 12-107a, et seq., of the Connecticut General Statutes declares Connecticut’s policy “... that it is in the public interest to encourage the preservation of farm land, forest land and open space land in order to ... conserve the state’s natural resources and to provide for the welfare and happiness of the inhabitants of the state...” Connecticut General Statutes,



Sections 47-42a through 47-42c and otherwise by law authorize the creation and enforcement of conservation restrictions, “whose purpose is to retain land or water areas predominantly in their natural, scenic or open condition or in agricultural, farming, forest, or open space use.”

- Part of the Premises lies within a recognized “preservation area”, a designation reserved in the State of Connecticut *Conservation and Development Policies Plan for Connecticut 2005-2010* (C&D Plan) for those places of greatest statewide conservation value. In addition the property shares a point of contact with existing preserved open space of Tunxis State Forest. The locational guide maps for the *Conservation and Development Policies Plan for Connecticut 2005-2010*
ftp://ftp.state.ct.us/pub/opmigpdata/cd_access/town_pdf/Hartland.pdf
- Protection of the property yields a significant public benefit by adding to previously protected lands in Hartland, and supports the Town of Hartland’s Ten Year Plan’s primary objective of “maintaining the rural character” of the town.
- Conservation of the premises protects water quality of significant wetland habitats.



The property is located within the Upper Farmington River Watershed and is an area covered by the Upper Farmington River Management Plan which was completed by the Farmington River Study Committee on April 29, 1993 in



conjunction with the Farmington River's designation as a federally designated Wild and Scenic" river in 1994. This property is an integral part of the long term protection of the Upper Farmington River.

- Conservation of the premises would conserve an area of intact core forest habitat identified by the University of Connecticut's Center for Land Use Education and Research (CLEAR) Forest Fragmentation Analysis Project >500 acres in size. <http://clear.uconn.edu/projects/landscape/forestfrag/your/town.asp?townname=65&Go=Go>
- Conservation of this property is consistent with the Litchfield Hills Council of Elected Officials Regional Plan of Conservation and Development. It is recognized as an area of contiguous forest habitat and a potential environmentally sensitive area in their report issued October 9, 2009. Its protection contributes to the protection of the quality of life in the Litchfield Hills and is consistent with their objectives among which are the "protection of important open space and agricultural land, and preserve the unique rural character of the Region". ftp://ftp.state.ct.us/pub/opmigpdata/cd_access/RPO_Pdfs/Litchfield_Hills.pdf

6. Conservation Purpose and Conservation Values of the Property:

The Hartland Land Trust holds conservation interest in the protected property for specific conservation purposes: These include: public outdoor recreation and education, significant habitats and ecosystems; natural, scenic and open space values; water quality and riparian values.

Public Outdoor Recreation and Education

HLT anticipates use of the property by the community for recreational hiking, and for use for observation or study of wildlife and other natural resources. In addition to establishing hiking trails throughout the property which will be accessible to the general public throughout the year, occasional use by Conservation groups such as the Audubon Society for bird watching, etc. is expected. Also the property may be used for environmental education with the local schools, scouting groups and in conjunction with HLT's annual tracking hikes or similar events.

Significant Habitats and Ecosystems



The property contains significant forest and wetland areas. It is part of a larger undeveloped and unfragmented forest area with natural land cover. Although the existence of any rare species is currently unknown, there exists a diverse range of plant, animal, bird and amphibian life in an apparent healthy habitat. The property appears to be untouched by non-native species.



Natural, Scenic and Open Space Values

The property's open space values are significant in several ways. As the Hartland Land Trust's first property it is instrumental in the organization making a large step forward in its mission "to endeavor to maintain the rural character of the Hartland, Connecticut area for present and future generations by protecting its diverse natural resources through the conservation and management of significant lands". In addition it is possible that the property's location to adjacent lands with significant conservation values may serve as a catalyst to future conservation efforts both by landowners and by HLT. This property also contributes to achieving goals set by the Town of Hartland's Plan of Conservation and Development.

Water Quality and Riparian Values

These values are of the utmost importance. The large area of undisturbed wetlands on the property consisting of 3 small streams, swamps and beaver ponds serve as headwaters to a stream that eventually flows into the West Branch of the federally designated "Wild and Scenic" Farmington River. Conservation of this property is a critical component of the greater plan to protect the Farmington River Watershed. The Farmington River Watershed provides much of the drinking water for over 550,000 people in Greater Hartford and the Farmington Valley of Connecticut.



7. **Primary Threats (Stresses and Sources of Stress):** The conservation values of the property experiences varying degrees of stress from both proximate and more distant sources. These stresses, their sources and degree of severity, are discussed below in relation to the conservation values they impact or have the potential to impact on the Preserve. In addition, many of these threats are identified in the Conservation Restriction agreement that runs with the land conveyed by the donors and is forever “binding upon the Grantee and its successors and assigns as the owner or owners of the Property”:

- Soil Disturbance

The threat of soil disturbance is low. Excavation, soil removal, dredging, removal of soil is unlikely and would only occur in the event that an act of God required it or if it was necessary to maintain or protect the property and its safety and aesthetic quality.

- Hydrology Disturbance

The threat of hydrology disturbance is low. The use of pesticides, herbicides, insecticides, disturbance of soil, or dumping could be possible threats from humans. Pollution threats such as acid rain could occur. Human alteration of natural watercourses could also cause disturbance.



- Vegetative Disturbance

The threat of vegetative disturbance is medium. It might include introduction of non-native animals, destruction or cutting of trees, shrubs or plants, use of fertilizers, disturbance or change in the natural habitat of the forest and wetlands by humans. Introduction of destructive threats such as insects, pathogens or diseases could occur through natural means such as habitat change or weather events. Vegetative threats such as over grazing by wildlife such as deer or moose could occur as a result of habitat and widespread ecosystem changes.

- Invasive Species

Introduction of invasive species is medium. This could occur by humans, birds or natural occurrences such as weather events.

- Wildlife Disturbance

The threat of wildlife disturbance is medium. It could occur from illegal hunting, domestic animals, noise, motorized vehicles or natural occurrences such as disease.

- Aesthetic or Scenic Disturbance

The threat of aesthetic or scenic disturbance is medium. This could occur from use of the property in ways not conducive to its conservation values. It could also occur through natural means such as violent weather or natural disaster. Use of adjoining properties in ways not conducive to conservation could also cause aesthetic or scenic disturbance.

8. Management Objectives

The Hartland Land Trust will work to ensure that management of the Bassett/Kell property will achieve the goal of preserving the Property in its present natural and open condition and protect it from threats to its hydrological, vegetative, soil, wildlife, and aesthetic qualities and functions. The following Management Practices have been established to reach this goal. These practices will be reviewed on a regular basis but no less than every 5 years.



Management Practices:

Post the Property

Signs marking the more than 4000 feet of boundaries of the property would be posted identifying the property as owned by Hartland Land Trust. No Hunting signs may also be posted if deemed necessary. This would initially be done within 3 months of acquiring the property by volunteer HLT members and/or directors. Annual boundary walks would occur to replace any missing signs and observe the boundaries and become aware of any encroachment or changes to adjacent properties.

The initial cost of posting signs would be \$ 500
Annual ongoing costs: estimated at \$100





Establish Hiking Trails

Using the trails already established on the property, the trails would be expanded to reach the important natural areas of the property and improved for safety. A system for marking the trails would be established (“This way” signs). In addition, and necessary bridges or walkways over wet areas would be implemented in a way which least impacts the environment and provides the most natural methods possible. Monitoring and maintenance of the trails would be established on at least an annual basis with safety issues requiring more frequent maintenance. The monitoring and maintenance would be performed by volunteers.

Costs of establishing trails:

Cost of maintenance:

Monitor the Property on a Regular Basis

Establish a monitoring program that occurs at least yearly. The program could enlist Land Trust volunteers, local neighbors, volunteers from other organizations such as the Audubon Society, etc. led by a volunteer ecologist. Monitoring would include observations of changes and happenings on the property with respect to water, wildlife and vegetation. Monitoring would also serve evaluate the presences of invasive species. It would also serve as an annual clean up of the property to maintain trails, pick up any trash, and also to make notes regarding any unsafe areas due to tree damage, soil erosion, etc. A written report would be required following the monitoring walk. The report could be posted on the HLT website.

Cost of annual monitoring:

Place a Sign to Identify the Property

A small sign identifying the Bassett/Kell Property would be placed at entrance to the property where the 20’ right of way intersects Mill Street. This sign would be visible so that community members could locate the entrance to the property.



Initial cost of sign: \$150

Establish Parking Space

Determine an area available for parking for Property visitors. The width of the 20 foot right of way should provide sufficient space for two cars. This would prevent intrusion by visitors on the adjacent neighbors.

Cost: 0

Build and install a Signboard

Locate a signboard at the entrance to the main portion of the property in the back lot. The right of way to reach the property is approximately 350 feet in length from Mill Street to the main area of the property. The signboard would be located at this juncture and will be posted with information about the property, including trail descriptions & maps and perhaps wildlife or vegetative species seen on the property. In addition the guidelines for using the property will be posted. This would include listing all the prohibited activities in accordance with the Conservation Restriction agreement. The signboard would be built by volunteers from HLT and be put in place within a year of acquiring the property.

Cost of Signboard: \$300

Establish a Policy for Use by Groups of 6 or more

Groups of 6 or more people wishing to use the property would require pre-authorization from the Hartland Land Trust. We would establish a method by which permission would be granted. Information could be posted on the signboard and also on the HLT website.

Cost: \$0

Establish a Policy to Review Potential Problems

HLT will establish polices for addressing potential problems with the property. These could include encroachment issues, maintenance issues related to safety, large scale property damage due to storms or other acts of God, legal issues, or any other unforeseen stewardship problems. The Land Acquisition and Stewardship



Committee will meet and establish these policies within a year of acquiring the property. These policies may include the use of outside consultants or contractors when necessary. Those policies will be appended to this Management Plan. The committee, with approval of the Board of Directors of HLT will establish an amount of funding to be set aside for stewardship of the property.

Cost of establishing policies: \$0

Amount of funding set aside for stewardship:

9. Management Summary

The Hartland Land Trust, Inc. was established with its mission “to endeavor to maintain the rural character of the Hartland, Connecticut area for present and future generations by protecting its diverse natural resources through the conservation and management of significant lands”. We are thankful to the Bassett/Kell families for sharing this mission and choosing to forever conserve their property. We will to the best of our ability ensure that their goals of conservation of this pristine piece of Hartland exist in perpetuity.

Appendices:

Amendments

Property Maps

Easements

Photographs of key features, management areas

Baselines

Stewardship Reports